

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) A message router for routing a message between a server and a plurality of protocol gateways ~~that include processors to encapsulate and transparently convey messages with a plurality of message sources utilizing respective network protocols,~~ the message router comprising:

~~an authenticator to authenticate that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network, said authenticator authenticating said particular source of said message before said message is routed by said message router;~~

a load balancer module ~~associated with said message router~~ to determine a historical message transmission record for transmissions from said message router to said plurality of protocol gateways, said transmission record comprising identification of a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular protocol of ~~said source~~ a client device associated with of said message among ~~said~~ a plurality of network protocols of message sources; and

a ~~processor~~ routing module to route said message from said message router to a particular protocol gateway based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway and said particular protocol utilized by said client device of said message ~~for said source of said message that utilizes said support protocol.~~

20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router is a least recently used message router.

22. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router routes said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

23. (previously presented) The message router according to claim 19, wherein:

said message router routes said message based on a content of said message.

24. (currently amended) A method of routing a message between a server and a protocol gateway comprising:

establishing communications between a message router and
~~providing~~ a plurality of protocol gateways ~~that include processors to encapsulate~~
~~and transparently convey~~ messages communicated with a plurality of message
source[[s]] devices utilizing respective network protocols;

~~authenticating that a particular source of a message is an~~
~~authorized user of a messaging network before said message is routed by a~~
~~message router;~~

determining₁ from said message router₁ a historical record for
transmissions from said message router to said plurality of protocol gateways
comprising a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular
protocol of ~~said source~~ a client device associated with ~~of~~ said message among
~~said~~ a plurality of network protocols; and

routing said message from said message router to a particular
protocol gateway based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway
and said ~~for~~ said particular protocol utilized by said client device of said
message.

25. (canceled)

26. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, wherein:

said server is a least recently used message router.

27. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, further comprising:

routing said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

28. (previously presented) The method of routing a message according to claim 24, further comprising:
routing said message based on a content of said message.

29. (currently amended) An apparatus for routing a message between a server and a protocol gateway comprising:

means for establishing communications between a message router and providing a plurality of protocol gateways that include processors to encapsulate and transparently convey messages communicated with a plurality of message source[[s]] devices utilizing respective network protocols;

~~means for authenticating that a particular source of a message is an authorized user of a messaging network before said message is routed by a message router;~~

means for determining, from said message router, a historical record for transmissions from said message router to said plurality of protocol gateways comprising a least recently used protocol gateway supporting a particular protocol of said source a client device associated with ~~of~~ said message among ~~said~~ a plurality of network protocols; and

means for routing said message from said message router to a particular protocol gateway based on said determined least recently used protocol gateway and said for said particular protocol utilized by said client device of said message.

30. (canceled)

31. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, wherein:

said server is a least recently used message router.

32. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, further comprising:

means for routing said message to a most specific server corresponding to a message key.

33. (previously presented) The apparatus for routing a message according to claim 29, further comprising:

means for routing said message based on a content of said message.

34-41. (canceled)